

# BILLIONS

Episode 211

“Golden Frog Time”

Story by  
Brian Koppelman & David Levien & Brian Chamberlayne

Teleplay by  
Brian Koppelman & David Levien

**Production Draft**  
**Pink Pages 11/16/2016**  
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REVISION PAGE  
EP 211 - PINK PAGES

COLOR	DATE	PAGES
PINK PAGES	11/16/2016	13, 19, 19A, 21, 22, 22A, 23, 23A, 26, 26A, 27, 27A, 28, 28A, 29, 30A, 31, 31A, 34, 34A, 39, 42, 47, 56, 57, 57A

**CAST CHANGES:**

The following characters have been OMITTED:

The following characters have been CHANGED:

The following characters have been ADDED:

EDITOR  
EVERETT WRIGHT

**SET CHANGES:**

The following sets have been OMITTED:

The following sets have been CHANGED:

The following sets have been ADDED:

**SCENE CHANGES:**

The following scenes have been OMITTED:

The following scenes have been CHANGED:  
SC16, SC19, SC21, SC24, SC29, SC30, SC31, SC32, SC33, SCA38, SC39,  
SC40, SC42, SC47, SC51, SC56, SC66

The following scenes have been ADDED:

CAST  
EP 211 - PINK PAGES

CHUCK RHOADES .....	Paul Giamatti
BOBBY "AXE" AXELROD .....	Damian Lewis
WENDY RHOADES .....	Maggie Siff
LARA AXELROD .....	Malin Akerman
BRYAN CONNERTY .....	Toby Leonard Moore
MIKE "WAGS" WAGNER .....	David Costabile
KATE SACKER .....	Condola Rashad
TAYLOR MASON .....	Asia Kate Dillon
MAFEE .....	Dan Soder
IRA SCHIRMER .....	Ben Shenkman
LAWRENCE BOYD .....	Eric Bogosian
HALL .....	Terry Kinney
CHUCK RHOADES SR. ....	Jeffrey DeMunn
TERRY BURKE .....	Michael Stoyanov
OLIVER DAKE .....	Christopher Denham
"DOLLAR BILL" STEARN .....	Kelly AuCoin
RUDY .....	Chris Carfizzi
FERGUSON .....	Lucas Calhoun
GRAFF .....	Ellen Adair
MICHAEL DIMONDA .....	Sam Gilroy
JOHNNY BURKE .....	Kevin Breznahan
DAN MARGOLIS .....	Daniel Cosgrove
DR. ARI GILBERT .....	Seth Barrish
KARL ALLERD .....	Allan Havey
VICTOR MATEO .....	Louis Cancelmi
RANDY KORNBLUTH .....	Brian Berebbi
MAUREEN "MO" REEGERT .....	Erinn Ruth
BEN KIM .....	Daniel K. Isaac
ARI SPYROS .....	Stephen Kunken
RANDO PARALEGAL .....	Quinn Franzen
GORDIE AXELROD .....	Jack Gore
DEAN AXELROD .....	Christopher Paul Richards
INSTRUCTOR .....	John Danaher
<b>EVERETT WRIGHT</b> .....	Keith Chappelle
DEB KAWI .....	Ilfenesh Hadera
SLAYTON .....	Lenny Venito
HOUSEKEEPER .....	Helena Betancourt
<b>EDITOR</b> .....	
PUNUNZIO .....	
RONNIE .....	
MARVIN .....	
BROKER .....	
LAB TECH .....	

SETS  
EP 211 - PINK PAGES

INTERIORS

AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE  
AXE CAPITAL, BULLPEN  
AXE CAPITAL, COMMISSARY  
AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM  
AXE CAPITAL, OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM  
AXE CAPITAL, TRADING FLOOR  
AXE CAPITAL, WAGS' OFFICE  
AXE CAPITAL, WENDY'S OFFICE  
AXELROD HOME, BEDROOM  
AXELROD HOME, FAMILY ROOM  
AXELROD HOME, KITCHEN  
AXELROD HOME, TOP OF STAIRCASE  
AXELROD HOME, YOGA ROOM  
BIO-TECH LAB  
DOCTOR'S OFFICE  
FINANCIAL JOURNAL  
FINANCIAL JOURNAL, ANOTHER DESK  
ICE JUICE STORE  
INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDOR  
IRISH BAR  
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL  
RESPONSIBILITY, DAKE'S OFFICE  
PENN STATION  
RENZO GRACIE JIU JITSU  
RHOADES HOME, BEDROOM  
SENIOR'S APARTMENT  
SENIOR'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM  
SENIOR'S APARTMENT, STUDY  
U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, CHUCK'S  
OFFICE  
U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, CONFERENCE  
ROOM  
U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, ENTRY HALL  
U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, LIBRARY  
YALE CLUB, CHUCK'S ROOM

EXTERIORS

AXE CAPITAL  
AXE CAPITAL, PARKING LOT  
CITY STREET  
ICE JUICE STORE  
IRISH BAR  
PENN STATION  
RHOADES HOME  
STREET  
STREET CORNER, NEAR WAREHOUSE  
SUBURBAN LAWN  
TAYLOR'S APARTMENT BUILDING

INTERIORS/EXTERIORS

FANCY SUBURBAN KITCHEN  
ICE JUICE PRODUCE WAREHOUSE

OPEN ON:

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK: TWO WEEKS AGO.

"Even The Losers" by Tom Petty plays. Loud.

1 EXT. IRISH BAR - NIGHT 1  
Establishing.

TERRY BURKE (PRE-LAP V.O.)  
...Everybody pays...

2 INT. IRISH BAR - NIGHT 2  
JOHNNY and TERRY BURKE, last seen in 210, are in their haunt.  
Terry, the tougher brother, is at a booth in the back across from SLAYTON, half a mook, 40s.

Johnny leans on the corner of the next booth (or somewhere else within earshot), half paying attention, half not.

As Slayton talks, Terry pours some Irish Whiskey into his coffee.

SLAYTON  
...Yes. Yes. Yes I understand. And if I get paid on time next week, which, when you're a contractor, you never really know, then of course I'll pay you, Terry. Right away. First fucking thing.

Terry picks up his Irish coffee. Takes a long sip. Sets it back down, the almost amused expression never leaving his face.

TERRY BURKE  
Well, that's a relief. Isn't it, Johnny?

JOHNNY BURKE  
Yeah, I felt myself sighing, in fact. In sweet relief.

And then it's silent for a beat. Slayton wants to say something. Can't. And then...

(CONTINUED)

TERRY BURKE

Some guys, no matter how well  
intentioned they may be...

And with this, Terry makes a theatrical point and shoot  
gesture to Slayton.

TERRY BURKE

...Can't seem to find the money  
when it is owed. Which leads to  
difficult conversations like this  
one.

SLAYTON

I am well intended.

JOHNNY BURKE

And don't think we don't know it!

TERRY BURKE

You're a good guy, Slayton. And  
I'll tell you something. I've never  
considered myself a bad guy. Do you  
think I'm a bad guy?--

Slayton, hopeful, answers very quickly.

SLAYTON

No!--

TERRY BURKE

Good.

Without further warning Terry PUNCHES Slayton, a short right  
to the face. Hard. Slayton's head snaps back. Fear fills his  
eyes.

TERRY BURKE

Wives have all the leverage, so I  
gotta do something to even the  
score. Now you have a compelling  
reason to pay me when she wants to  
pay the credit cards.

SLAYTON

Yes. I do. I owe you. And I will  
make it right, no matter what I  
have to do.

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3 CONTINUED: 3

WAGS, phone at his ear, feet up on his desk, listens a beat before taking his feet down.

WAGS (INTO PHONE)  
Was a time, folks in your job had  
the sense to duck my fucking call  
until you had good news for me.

Wags hangs up the phone. He stands, exits, crosses the...

4 INT. AXE CAPITAL, TRADING FLOOR - NIGHT 4

DEB KAWI and TAYLOR are the only people still at the place.  
Wags walks by and goes into...

5 INT. AXE'S OFFICE - NIGHT 5

AXE stands as Wags enters.

WAGS  
Remind me next time I forget:  
there's no one in this business who  
won't sell you out if they think  
there's a fucking nickel in it.

AXE  
I find that strangely reassuring.  
Eliminates the possibility of  
disillusionment.

WAGS  
Yes, yes, let the idealists and  
romantics get their hearts broken  
while the hard bitten pragmatists  
like us--

AXE  
Wow. You've got something you  
really don't want to tell me. Did  
they shoot Sonny on the Causeway?  
Otherwise, spit it the fuck out.

WAGS  
Boyd was right. I just hung up with  
Patriot Bank. After a wet and hot  
road show, they are taking out the  
Ice Juice IPO. Press is getting  
loaded with the story as we speak.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Shit. They think it's a winner?

WAGS

They do. There's more. Charles Rhoades Senior did take an Uncle Miltie sized position in the company. And I have run through it with primes all over town--ours, theirs, the other guys--and analysts at the big three, as well as our own people. They all agree with Patriot. It seems the old coot made a wise goddamned investment.

AXE

Fundamentals?

WAGS

Yeah. Solid. The projections are real. They are rolling out the IPO soon. Everyone thinks it's going to work. No one sees a short play we can make. I don't see an avenue of attack.

AXE

Personnel?

WAGS

That fucking lawyer, Ira Schirmer, who represented Rhoades at your deposition. He's got a board seat.

AXE

So Rhoades' father and closest confidant have just jumped head first into a business. Together. And you ambled in here to tell me that I have no way to wreck it. Fuck. This is Sonny on the Causeway.

Wags goes to the door. Waves Taylor in.

TAYLOR

The top sheet says that Charles Rhoades Senior is a high net worth individual. He has multiple business holdings, mostly in real estate. But, at the moment, it seems he's largely illiquid.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Because of some new cash-intensive  
real estate investments.

WAGS

Fucker is house poor?

TAYLOR

Houses. City co-op, Hamptons place,  
hobby farm in Mt. Kisco, an ocean  
front spread in Florida. And  
upstate--he bought up half of  
Kingsford. But he won't be able to  
flip that land for a real profit  
until the casino is in and open.

AXE

So the question is:

TAYLOR

Yes. Where did he get the capital  
for the juice company? I did a  
forensic look, and I cannot find  
the source.

WAGS

Which means, there is no  
institutional money behind his  
purchase of his share of Ice Juice.  
It had to be a personal loan of  
some sort.

AXE

Okay. Good. Thank you, Taylor.

Taylor leaves. Axe looks to Wags.

AXE

So Rhoades Senior got the money for  
Ice Juice from a private loan.

WAGS

Had to be someone very close to  
lend him that kind of jack.

AXE

Maybe too close.

The idea grows in Axe's mind.

AXE

You know those poison tip arrows  
certain tribes used that could go  
through one guy and kill another?  
This might be like that.

WAGS

Yeah. In South America. Golden Frog  
poison. I tried to smoke it once,  
but the shaman jumped across the  
tent to stop me.

AXE

And glad I am that he did.  
Otherwise, I'd have to enact this  
rich pageant without your wise and  
good counsel.

ON: Wags...

IRA (PRE-LAP V.O.)

The deal's going out at eighteen  
dollars per share...

INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

INSERT TITLE CARD: TONIGHT.

Chuck, Ira and Senior sit around the dining room table.  
Remnants of an Italian dinner, take out containers and bags  
from Sette Mezzo, are on the table.

IRA

Holy shit! I'm worth a hundred and  
twenty-five million dollars!

SENIOR

You may well be, soon enough. But  
don't allow yourself to feel it,  
just yet. Clouds the thinking at  
the exact moment you need to be  
clear headed.

Senior picks up a bottle of high end scotch, refills Ira and  
Chuck's glasses, then his own.

IRA

(pointing to the scotch)  
That's gonna clear my head?

SENIOR

Scotch this good'll make a mongoloid think like Einstein.

CHUCK

No, Jesus, no, Dad--

SENIOR

We're in my house, son. There'll be no nod to that Billie Jean King P.C. bullshit.

CHUCK

It's just wrong. Some things are--

IRA

No. You two. Not tonight. Not the night before my IPO comes out.

CHUCK

Quite so, Ira. Congratulations.

SENIOR

Absolutely. To that!

The three drink.

IRA

I just wish I were ringing the bell at the exchange in the morning. That would feel like--

SENIOR

Don't be a cliché, my boy, just be rich.

CHUCK

I am happy for you both that this venture is off to such an auspicious start. But I do advise caution--

IRA

Well, you brought us together. Whatever happens, you share in it, emotionally, if not financially.

CHUCK

I do. My emotions are all tied up  
in it for sure.

IRA

Chuck, when the market closes  
tomorrow, and we have ridden this  
thing all the way up, that one  
hundred and twenty five million  
number might be conservative--

CHUCK

Don't quit your day job.

IRA

Too late.

CHUCK

You didn't.

IRA

Well, not all the way. But close.  
I'm selling my share of the firm to  
my partners. It's been a long time  
coming. Tomorrow's liberation day.

SENIOR

You never tally your sheet until  
the lock up period is over...

Senior's words of experience tamp down Ira's smile.

SENIOR

But even I have to admit, it does  
feel great. You did a good thing  
here, son, you absolutely did.

Ira's smile returns.

On: Chuck, smiling along, but with deeper concern in his  
eyes, below the surface.

CHUCK

I hope that's true, dad. I really  
do.

Chuck heads for the door.

7 EXT. RHOADES HOME - DAY 7

Establishing shot of morning.

8 INT. RHOADES HOME, BEDROOM - DAY 8

Chuck and WENDY wake up together. They share a smile.

CHUCK

Is this--

WENDY

Weird?

CHUCK

I was going to say 'feeling as right to you' but now...

WENDY

Sorry. I mean making a habit of these husband wife booty calls.

CHUCK

'Booty call.' I feel I'm finally a man of my time.

Chuck reaches for his iPhone.

CHUCK

How do you think I engineer a cup of Stumptown?

WENDY

Not by going to the kitchen. You've gotta slip out before the kids are up. It's not fair to give them false hope.

CHUCK

False? That's gonna leave a mark.

Wendy is up and putting on a robe. Chuck is sitting up in bed, absorbed in his phone.

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

You look like my guys at work right now--what's so interesting?

CHUCK

Pre-trading news on the juice IPO. And it is good news.

WENDY

So exciting for Ira.

Chuck tries not to speak to it, but can't help it.

CHUCK

Not just Ira...Nobody knows this, not even Ira, but I'm in it too.

This is a surprise to her.

WENDY

In it?

CHUCK

That's right.

WENDY

Why?

CHUCK

Because it's a winner.

WENDY

And you know this because...?

CHUCK

Because I saw it. Exactly what would happen with this company and what it would do for me. I've only seen three things that clearly in my life. One was my first time actually arguing in court--I knew it was my calling. The second was when I met you--and I knew it was my destiny. The third was this.

WENDY

Wow. That is some statement. Well, good luck then.

As he starts to dress she looks over at him with concern.

9 INT. AXELROD HOME, BEDROOM - DAY 9

Axe wakes up and looks over to find...Lara is gone. He is alone again.

With a WTF look on his face he rises and moves quickly...

10 INT. AXELROD HOME, TOP OF STAIRCASE - DAY 10

Down the stairs and into...

11 INT. AXELROD HOME, KITCHEN - DAY 11

DEAN and GORDIE sit eating breakfast. A bit of relief plays on Axe.

AXE  
Where's mom?

DEAN  
Downstairs.

12 INT. AXELROD HOME, YOGA ROOM - DAY 12

Axe enters to find LARA and her YOGA INSTRUCTOR doing sun salutations.

AXE  
Good morning.

LARA  
Hi, do you need me?

AXE  
No, I'll see you later. You can get back to your downward dog.

13 INT. RENZO GRACIE JIU JITSU - DAY 13

Chuck, now with a stripe on his belt, grapples with a fit OPPONENT, who wears a blue belt. The INSTRUCTOR looks on.

Chuck has him locked down in full guard with sleeve grips. Then Chuck lets the Opponent get one hand FREE. The Opponent posts on the hand.

(CONTINUED)

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13 CONTINUED: 13

Chuck seizes the opportunity, grabs the Opponent's wrist,  
puts on a Kimura arm lock...

INSTRUCTOR  
Finish it...

And Chuck forces the man to tap out. Pleased and amazed,  
Chuck sits up.

INSTRUCTOR  
You saw that you had to give him  
something, an opportunity--then you  
used it against him. Well done.

Chuck has a moment of satisfaction at this lesson learned.

14 EXT. AXE CAPITAL - DAY 14

Establishing.

15 INT. AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 15

Taylor is unpacking a series of file folders when Wags walks  
in.

WAGS  
Upped to boss and already hard at  
it. Follow me.

Taylor nods, grabs their iPad and leaves with Wags.

16 INT. AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE - DAY 16

Taylor enters on Wags and Axe.

TAYLOR  
You wanted to--

AXE  
We hear someone's getting shanked  
today.

TAYLOR  
I'm sorry?

AXE  
Your review of the analysts...

Taylor gets it. Turns their iPad toward Axe.

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

Ah. Yes. Here's my breakdown of each analyst's performance. I have ranked them. And if we want to follow the old GE model of removing the bottom ten percent, it does, unfortunately, mean someone has to be let go. And you can see from the bottom box who. So I'll tell HR and--

\*

AXE

Wait a sec. You're just going to look at a chart?

TAYLOR

The chart makes it clear.

WAGS

And right before bonus time. That's cold, even by my standards.

AXE

Yeah. That's not how we do it here. On paper. Not like that. Asymmetrical returns, right? Not just in our stocks. In our people, too. Sit with each one of them. Probe for the weaknesses and strengths. Figure out who is going to outperform your printouts and who has already had his best year.

TAYLOR

Sitting with people, so they can equivocate and try to explain away what's already been shown clearly seems inefficient.

AXE

Taylor, I know you come from analytics, that the numbers are where you live. But you've got to learn the other piece. Small group of people can do the math. Even smaller group can explain it. The few who can do both--they become billionaires.

WAGS

From a man who knows. Well said, sir.

\*

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

Ok. I'll do the meetings.

WAGS

And that's when you shank 'em!

TAYLOR

I am not shanking anyone--

AXE

Call it what you will. But we all know you gotta shank someone, to earn respect on the yard.

TAYLOR

How many jailhouse movies did you people watch growing up?

WAGS

We didn't have computers.

AXE

Run your department how you see fit...

TAYLOR

But...

AXE

Yeah. You gotta look right into their eyes as the life drains out of 'em.

Taylor crisply nods to them and leaves. After a beat, once Taylor is out in the middle of the floor, Wags leans out after them.

WAGS

(kind of shouting)

Have fun! I remember the first time I shitcanned someone. It tasted as sweet as the Mata Hari's arm pits.

The FLOOR reacts, in quiet fear. Taylor barely stops moving on their way to the conference room.

Chuck sits behind his desk while RANDO PARALEGAL works on Chuck's computer, installing QUODD stock-watch software.

RANDO

So, you're logged in. This tracks any equities you enter. Moment by moment updates and newsfeed...You know you didn't have to pay for this, you could just go to Yahoo finance and hit refresh every few--

CHUCK

I'm aware. Are we set?

Rando gets the drift and heads for the door as ARI SPYROS of the SEC, with CONNERTY and SACKER are shown in by DONNA. They fall out in the seating area.

SPYROS

Klaxon Auto Group. Belgian company. Was a big seller in Europe and Asia, looking to break in here. Until recently.

Spyros pulls out a folder of trading history.

CHUCK

I read some stories about it--pump the brakes and there's nothing there. Big recalls and fines. A corporate cover up. But a bit out of our jurisdiction, no?

SPYROS

(with a Spyros smile)

No. The company was robust. The whole Street was long. But Bobby Axelrod happened to be short--right before the news broke.

SACKER

As always.

CONNERTY

You have anything proving criminality?

Spyros hands over his documents.

SPYROS

I'll leave that to the super sleuths of Southern...A natural alliteration. Nice...The surface looks smooth, but there's got to be criminality underneath. So fire up the Mystery Machine.

(CONTINUED)

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17 CONTINUED: (2) 17

Chuck seems uncharacteristically distracted, looking at the clock. It's almost 9:30.

CHUCK  
Thanks, Spyros, we'll give it a look.

SPYROS  
Keep me posted.

Spyros exits.

SACKER  
Can we dive into this one, open a case?

CHUCK  
Sure, sure. Listen, it's 9:30.

Chuck stands, gestures for them to use the door, as he hurries around behind his computer.

CHUCK  
Opening bell.

Connerty and Sacker share a look as they exit.

18 INT. MONTAGE - DAY 18

--Close on Chuck behind his desk, eyes on his screen.

--Ira stands behind Senior in Senior's study, looking at the computer.

--Axe sits behind his desk, glances at his Bloomberg.

--MAFEE at his Bloomberg calls it:

MAFEE  
And they're off. Ice Juice, trading under the symbol ICEJ, is already pushing north of twenty...

19 INT. AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 19

BEN KIM, trying hard not to crumble, sits opposite Taylor.

There is a quiet moment as Taylor, head down in documents, does not make eye contact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ben Kim can't handle the silence. Takes a sip of coffee. Then catches himself.

BEN

Oh. I see I have coffee--  
cappuccino, actually, but you  
don't. I can run down and get you  
one, or a green tea--Genmaicha--or  
whatever you might--

Now Taylor starts to speak. At first, they don't lift their head up from the paper, but by midway, their eyes start boring right into Ben's head...

TAYLOR

I have broken down and ranked each analyst in the following ten categories: performance, process, 360 degree workflow, quality of models, culture fit, team mentality, sheer number of fresh ideas, stubbornness--in both its good and bad shadings--value/skew tendencies--that is, do you look for low risk/large skew opportunities, and bias.

...And Ben begins to crumble.

TAYLOR

Do you get anchored to old names that aren't working? And then, I created an eleventh category, which I am calling desire. That is where we will start our discussion this morning. So. If you would, please talk about your desire to remain at Axe Capital.

Ben takes a deep breath as he prepares to answer, and then JUST BEGINS SOBBING.

BEN

I can't tell my mother I'm fired. I just can't. Do you have any idea of how a Korean mother responds to something like that...?

ON: Taylor, processing.

CUT BACK: to Ben's chair, only Ben isn't in it, it's the next analyst, FERGUSON.

(CONTINUED)

FERGUSON

I grew up in Idaho. We had a business club in ninth grade, mock investment accounts. By tenth grade, I was running money in an e-trade account for the principal of my high school, the guidance counselor and the asshole gym teacher.

TAYLOR

Gym teacher?

FERGUSON

I kept his in a second account and made sure it nose dived the day after graduation. Cuz fuck that guy.

ON: Taylor, jotting down a note.

TAYLOR

So your anger at a person in a higher station, led you to take punitive action.

FERGUSON

You gonna fire me for being honest?

On: Taylor.

TAYLOR

What gives you a distinct advantage over all the other capable people here?

CUT BACK: To another analyst, PUNUNZIO.

PUNUNZIO

Brainpower. Sheer mental capacity.

TAYLOR

You're that far beyond the rest of us?

PUNUNZIO

Not you. I don't mean you.

TAYLOR

So you are both wildly egotistical and scared of conflict.

(CONTINUED)

19

PUNUNZIO

No. I'm...I asked my father and he  
said to project that I'm not at all  
worried about this.

TAYLOR

Interesting approach, Pununzio.

Some desperation creeps into Pununzio's voice.

\*

PUNUNZIO

Please don't fire me.

Taylor, still not used to the position, grapples with it.

\*

20

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

20

Connerty sits amidst old coffee cups and food wrappers when  
Sacker enters with a manila envelope with an SEC crest.

SACKER

This just got here. From the SEC.

She tears open the envelope, pulls out trading reports,  
handing Connerty a copy.

SACKER

The Axe Cap research. On Klaxon  
Auto.

They each skim.

SACKER

You look at this: a strong company.  
Very few short positions out there.  
Then the stock dives on bad news.

CONNERTY

Disastrous, not just bad.

SACKER

And Axelrod is right where he needs  
to be. Which is not illegal unto  
itself.

CONNERTY

Because why? He's got research that  
puts him on the right side.

They each go deeper into the Axe Cap research report.

(CONTINUED)

SACKER  
Sales were strong. They didn't like  
the finance side.

20

CONNERTY

Like Tesla. They're moving units,  
doesn't mean the numbers add up.

SACKER

Yeah. This company's been around  
fifty years. Not carrying so much  
debt...

They get to the end of the report.

SACKER

Oh.

CONNERTY

Right.

SACKER

Report signed by Taylor Mason...You  
were trying to warn the kid about  
the place they're working.

CONNERTY

Yeah. I think "they" know.

Connerty crosses to the white board and moves Taylor's  
picture to near the top, right below Axe's.

21

INT. AXE CAPITAL, WENDY'S OFFICE - DAY

21

Taylor steps through the door. Wendy, by her desk, looks up.

TAYLOR

How do you fire someone?

Wendy stands, moves toward her chair.

WENDY

Hmm, you can stand, but I'm going  
to sit for this one.

She sits.

(CONTINUED)

WENDY

The first question you've gotta ask  
is: why are you firing someone?

Taylor meets eyes with Wendy.

WENDY

Now, I know you've already asked  
and answered that question  
properly. That's the kind of person  
you are. But just so I know exactly  
what we're talking about, why don't  
you tell me who you're firing...

Taylor takes a seat.

TAYLOR

I'm not sure. Yet. But when I look  
at the efficiency of the analyst  
department, I'm seeing some  
bagginess. So I'm sitting with  
everyone and drilling down.  
Honestly, I'm hoping with some  
direction and some motivation they  
can pick it up without my having  
to--

WENDY

Yeah, it'd be nice if a pep talk  
could do the trick. But analysts  
are too important. Their  
responsibility is too built in. You  
can't afford to carry one who isn't  
pulling his or her weight. So do  
them the long term favor of ripping  
off the band-aid and getting them  
one step closer to where they're  
headed and what they should be  
doing.

The blunt dose of advice hits Taylor hard. They stand.

TAYLOR

Thank you. I had a feeling that was  
the course.

\*

WENDY

One thing though--doing it will  
change you.

TAYLOR

I'm used to radical shifts.

WENDY

This is different. I have a feeling there's a specific reason you're struggling with this. The question you're asking yourself--say it aloud.

A beat.

TAYLOR

I'm looking for affirmation. My father was fired. When I was in seventh grade. He was a mathematician at an aerospace company. His division, and his job, went away, and it never came back.

The pain is still fresh for Taylor. Wendy is empathetic.

WENDY

I imagine that affected the home life.

TAYLOR

Um, yeah. It did.

\*

Taylor nods, turns for the door.

\*

WENDY

And the company?

\*

\*

TAYLOR

The company thrived.

\*

\*

As Taylor crosses the floor, any signs of waffling or introspection start to fall away, and they walk tall.

Near the conference room, Taylor steels herself, then points to GRAFF.

TAYLOR

(low and tough)  
Graff, let's go.

A nervous Graff gets up and walks toward the conference room.

23 INT. AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE - DAY 23

Axe looks down over the lower trading floor when his phone rings.

HALL

Rhodes and Wendy have spent another night together.

(CONTINUED)

23

AXE

Uh huh.

HALL

There's an encouraging meaning we can give this. Empowering even. Renewed stability on their home front might calm Rhoades, make him less likely to pursue--

AXE

Yeah. No. What it means is that the annihilation of this motherfucker is a long way from complete. He's happier today than he was last week. That means he's winning and I'm losing.

HALL

So is it time?

AXE

Not yet. Almost.

Axe clicks off.

24

INT. MONTAGE - DAY

24

--Chuck, in the back seat of an SUV, watches the stock. \*

--Ira and Senior do too.

IRA

We cracked twenty-five!

He goes for a high five. Senior reluctantly and uncomfortably returns it.

--Axe, near Mafee's desk, leans in and sees the price.

He is walking away when his phone rings. INTERCUT:

25

INT. INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDOR - DAY

25

LAWRENCE BOYD, in work coveralls, stands in the hallway on a cheap pre-paid cell phone.

BOYD

Stock is running. When will you do it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AXE

Fucking soon.

Axe hangs up. Boyd goes back to buffing the linoleum floor.

26 INT. AXE CAPITAL, OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 26

A shaken looking Graff emerges from her interview with Taylor. Taylor remains inside the room, going over documents.

Ferguson looks to Graff.

GRAFF

Still alive. For now.

She hurries off before she crumbles.

27 INT. AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 27

Taylor looks up to see DOLLAR BILL standing at the door.

DOLLAR BILL

This fun for you?

TAYLOR

No.

DOLLAR BILL

Then skip out on the rest. Let's go grab a coffee.

TAYLOR

Me and you...

DOLLAR BILL

Us. Yeah.

TAYLOR

This is like the third time you have directly spoken to me.

DOLLAR BILL

Well, that was before.

TAYLOR

Before.

DOLLAR BILL

Okay. You don't want to have coffee? Fine. We'll do the thing later.

He kind of knocks on the wall a couple times in a gesture that replaces words, turns and leaves. Taylor just stares after him.

28 INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT, STUDY - DAY

28

Ira turns from the computer screen in disbelief.

IRA

Do you realize that at this number,  
I'm worth close to a quarter of a  
billion dollars?

Senior, getting in the spirit, raises a hand.

SENIOR

Up high, kid.

Ira cracks a high five.

IRA

I'm getting an Ice Juice from the  
fridge. Want one?

SENIOR

Don't get high on your own supply.  
I'll not be drinking that nonsense.  
Bring me something with alcohol in  
it.

Once Ira is out of the room, Senior picks up his phone and  
calls his broker.

SENIOR

Stock's about to pop to 30. Double  
my position, at the market.

BROKER

That'll tap the account.

SENIOR

If I had more, I'd fucking buy  
more. This thing is running like  
Bill Rodgers in Boston: fast and  
long.

He hangs up.

29 INT. AXE CAPITAL, AXE'S OFFICE - DAY

29

Axe sits at his Bloomberg locked in, reading the tape on  
ICEJ. Wags is with him. Mafee enters.

MAFEE

This ICEJ issue is a real BBW, big  
and bouncy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAFEE (CONT'D)

Traderight is bidding for close to seven hundred thousand shares on the name.

\*

It's clear from their faces that this is unusual.

WAGS

Traderight? Place is the fucking Lollipop Guild. Why is a tiny-ass retail brokerage looking to move that kind of weight?

\*

AXE

Seven hundred thousand shares. That's a big print for a place like that.

MAFEE

I'm gonna find out what's up with it.

Mafee heads out.

WAGS

You think it's him? Rhoades Senior buying in heavy?

AXE

Could be. Hedge funds and institutions would want to show Patriot that they're supporting the deal, so they'd do their transaction with them. Or with one of the other syndicate managers. Only a knowledgeable and motivated individual would use a small retail shop for a buy like this. It's a cash play, no credit, nothing on margin...

\*

WAGS

So...everything's in place...

Axe thinks for a moment.

AXE

Yeah...It's Golden Frog time.

Axe picks up his phone and texts Iceland a message.

ANGLE ON THE MESSAGE: "Golden Frog time."

30 INT. BIO-TECH LAB - NIGHT, FLASHBACK 30  
INSERT TITLE CARD: 6 NIGHTS AGO.

Rows of tables with centrifuges, shaking incubators and microscopes. It's after hours and the lab is closed. Except for one station where a LAB TECH stands next to another MAN.

The Man's face is pressed against a microscope.

MICROSCOPE POV: Something small but aggressive consumes other material on the slide.

The Man looks up from the microscope. It is HALL.

HALL

It seems very fast.

LAB TECH

It is. And nasty. It'll be a brutal \*  
few days. But nothing fatal. \*

Hall takes a large brick of CASH from his jacket pocket, slides it across. The Lab Tech opens a dry ice freezer and gives Hall a plastic Pelican case. \*

ANGLE ON: The case. Hall pops it open revealing a DOZEN STEEL \*  
VIALS nestled in foam. \*

31 INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY, FLASHBACK 31

Axe sits across from DOCTOR ARI GILBERT, from 110.

DR. GILBERT

...Well, it's going to make for a  
bumpy couple of days.

AXE

But no permanent damage, Doc? \*

DR. GILBERT

If they're healthy to begin with?  
No, no permanent damage...

Axe nods. All he needed to know. But Gilbert goes on. \*

DR. GILBERT \*

I'm still not sure I'd recommend  
it. \*

AXE

I've registered that.

DR. GILBERT

Good. Do you want your slide back  
from my lab, or...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dr. Gilbert holds up a slide.

AXE

Get rid of it for me.

Gilbert drops the slide in a medical waste bin. Axe hands over a check.

AXE

For your foundation, to continue your research.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

DR. GILBERT

We're grateful for your ongoing  
generosity...

32 EXT. STREET CORNER, NEAR WAREHOUSE - NIGHT, FLASHBACK 32

INSERT TITLE CARD: FOUR NIGHTS AGO.

Hall stands near his car in almost complete darkness. A man,  
RONNIE, in a Carhartt jacket walks up. Hall, wearing gloves,  
produces a STEEL VIAL. \*

HALL

Money's in the account. And as you  
know, it's a lot of money. That's  
how I do it: I say I'm going to  
change your life--in either  
direction--and I do. \*

He hands it to Ronnie, who puts it in his lunchbox. Then Hall  
hands him a brand new SPONGE.

RONNIE

How much do I use? \*

HALL

Not a lot. Just trace amounts.  
That's all that's in there. \*

RONNIE

So just dab it around?

Hall seems disappointed.

HALL

Yes. I've been instructed we're not  
assassins, this is for the optics  
piece. \*

RONNIE

It's like Brylcreem. A little  
dab'll do ya--

HALL

(not sharing the levity)  
Trace amounts. On my signal.

Ronnie nods, walks on, then enters...

33 EXT./INT. ICE JUICE PRODUCE WAREHOUSE - SAME, FLASHBACK 33

Rows of beautiful, fresh fruit and vegetables line the space.  
WORKERS carry cartons earmarked for various locations.  
JUICING and BOTTLING is underway.

(CONTINUED)

SIGNAGE READS: ICE JUICE--GET RAW. GET SOUL. GET ICED.

Ronnie enters, takes off his jacket revealing a nametag that reads: RONNIE - MANAGER.

He sets his lunchbox down on his desk, pops it open and looks at the STEEL VIAL. Then he looks out at all the produce and the bottling that's happening. \*

34 INT. IRISH BAR - NIGHT, FLASHBACK 34

INSERT TITLE CARD: THREE NIGHTS AGO.

Axe sits with the Burkes, huddled, talking. We can't hear what they're saying.

JOHNNY BURKE

We got just the guy. He owes.

TERRY BURKE

Sometimes, a man comes into your life at just the right time, you know?

AXE

Absolutely.

Then they huddle again.

35 INT/EXT. FANCY SUBURBAN KITCHEN - DAY, FLASHBACK 35

INSERT TITLE CARD: TWO DAYS AGO.

SEEN THROUGH THE WINDOW: A hardworking Latina HOUSEKEEPER pulls garbage cans inside from the driveway to the garage.

VICTOR

My wife caught her stealing jewelry. I love the way she cleans. But it's either this or she gets deported. Her choice.

Axe is talking to VICTOR in the kitchen as they watch.

AXE

As long as it doesn't come from you. Get someone else to ask her.

VICTOR

I've got ten guys who can do that. Won't track back to me.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

Good.

36 EXT. SUBURBAN LAWN - DAY, FLASHBACK 36

INSERT TITLE CARD: ONE DAY AGO.

Axe stands with DANNY MARGOLIS in front of a NICE HOUSE.

MARGOLIS

Thanks for paying it off.

AXE

I do what I say I'm gonna do. You sure about this? It won't be pleasant for whoever you hire.

MARGOLIS

Well my kids need their college accounts topped off.

AXE

How many you have again?

MARGOLIS

Four girls. And a boy.

ON: Axe.

AXE

Okay...It's gotta be people you trust, but there can't be a clear connection.

Axe gestures between the two of them.

MARGOLIS

Got it. I have some ideas...

37 EXT. ICE JUICE STORE - DAY 37

INSERT TITLE CARD: EARLIER TODAY.

A man sits on a bench across from the store GUZZLING a bottle of Ice Juice. As he lowers it, we see it is Slayton.

He sits and waits, looking slightly unsettled.

A38 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A38

Margolis is in conversation with MARVIN, who is holding a bottle of Hello Yellow in one hand and a STEEL VIAL in the other.

\*  
\*

MARVIN

I can't do it--

MARGOLIS

What do you mean 'can't'? You've gotta do it. You promised me and you owe me.

MARVIN

I still owe you, but I can't do this to myself man. Not even for you.

He hands the Hello Yellow and vial to Margolis, and walks away. Margolis checks his watch, then looks at the bottle.

\*

After a beat, he cracks the cap, adds the contents of the vial and starts drinking.

\*  
\*

38 INT. ICE JUICE STORE - DAY 38

INSERT TITLE CARD: NOW.

It's later. There's a HEALTHY CROWD in the serene white-tiled store. Cool music plays. People wait on line, buy products.

Slayton collects his Almost Blue from the counter and turns away. Now he looks a little queasy and unwell.

He takes a sip, then SPEWS UP purple colored juice all over the white tile floor before collapsing.

Customers REACT WITH ALARM.

39 INT. FINANCIAL JOURNAL - DAY 39

MIKE DIMONDA sits down with his lunch to an already-ringing phone. He answers, listens, grabs for his pen and notebook.

His EDITOR is passing by and Dimonda calls out:

DIMONDA

Burt, I'm gonna table the new home starts feature, I've got something breaking. People are getting sick on Ice Juice...

The Editor reacts: Holy crap. \*

EDITOR \*

Do it. I'm gonna throw some other bodies on it with you. \*

40 INT. AXE CAPITAL, CONFERENCE ROOM/BULLPEN - DAY 40

Through the glass we see Taylor finishing up with ANOTHER ANALYST who exits, shaken.

Graff and Ferguson, watching, look to each other.

FERGUSON

Jesus.

GRAFF

I'm already having PTSD just looking at him.

Wendy makes her way across the floor and sees:

(CONTINUED)

A group of Axe Cap regulars: Dollar Bill, Ben Kim, Mafee, EVERETT WRIGHT are crowded around Mafee's screen. There's a bunch of excitement over what they're seeing.

EVERETT

I have the under on thirty-five.

\*

\*

MAFEE

Oh, I'll cover that shit.

\*

\*

We HEAR more betting jargon.

\*

Taylor steps out of the conference room.

WENDY  
How's it going?

TAYLOR  
Okay.

WENDY  
What's the action on?

TAYLOR  
We're short a name. And as of now,  
it's going up. People are betting  
on the exact moment it will turn  
and start falling.

Wendy continues on, closer to the cluster.

WENDY  
Maybe I'll get in on this--anyone  
betting that it won't turn?

Mafee, who's heard this, turns to Wendy.

MAFEE  
No ma'am. This is a red light  
short. Axe doesn't get positions  
this size wrong.

WENDY  
What is it?

MAFEE  
Ice Juice.

ON: Wendy. Understanding and concern play on Wendy's face.

WENDY  
...You know what? No thanks.

She turns and begins to exit the floor.

41 INT. AXE CAPITAL, COMMISSARY - MOMENTS LATER

41

Wendy, on her way out, spots Rudy, Ferguson and Graff, glumly  
grabbing snacks and drinks. She approaches Rudy.

WENDY  
I'm sorry, I'm going to have to  
cancel our appointment.

(CONTINUED)

RUDY

Oh no, I really could use to talk--

WENDY

I can't do it now.

RUDY

It's just that someone's getting  
fired, and it really can't be me.

WENDY

Convince Taylor.

41

Wendy moves on but Rudy falls into stride with her.

RUDY  
Can I walk you out?

WENDY  
You already are.

RUDY  
I don't even belong in this place.  
I was hoping you could get me  
jacked up, but now Taylor is going  
to see the truth and I'll be gone  
and it's not fair.

WENDY  
What's not fair.

RUDY  
Do you know my name?

WENDY  
Rudy.

RUDY  
Yeah. But my real name is Peter...

WENDY  
I'm sorry. I can't listen to you  
right now. I have a family  
emergency.

From above, TAYLOR'S VOICE rings out.

TAYLOR  
RUDY!

Rudy and Wendy look to each other.

WENDY  
Tell it to Taylor.

And Wendy is gone.

42

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, CHUCK'S OFFICE - DAY

42

Chuck's behind his desk, eyes on his computer screen, when  
Wendy walks in, surprising him.

WENDY  
Sorry to barge in.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Always welcome. What's going on?

He stands, comes around the desk.

WENDY

How's your stock play? I heard something...

CHUCK

I think it's going well. Seems to be up. Way up.

She takes him in, his innocence and optimism, it guts her.

WENDY

Oh Chuck...it's not gonna stay there.

CHUCK

Is that why you came charging in here?

\*  
\*  
\*

WENDY

Yes. Out of concern. And loyalty. The thing I heard: Axe Cap is short the stock.

Chuck feigns surprise that Axe is attacking. But is also wounded that his own wife is underestimating him.

\*  
\*

CHUCK

Thank you for telling me. I appreciate it. Though I don't appreciate you looking at me like I'm some kind of pathetic dog in a shelter.

\*

She brushes this aside.

WENDY

Get out of the stock, Chuck. Any way you can. They're going to crush you.

This really pricks Chuck's pride.

CHUCK

Is that so? I'm glad to know you view me as so defenseless...

WENDY

I think enough of you to come here  
and violate my agreement with my  
company.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WENDY (CONT'D)

And I think of you as a fucking Titan--in your arena. But you don't understand what you're dealing with.

CHUCK

I think I understand plenty about your lack of faith right now.

WENDY

We can bicker as long you want--another time. But are you going to get out of your position?

CHUCK

No.

WENDY

Can't or won't?

CHUCK

What difference does it make?

WENDY

Foolishness is right next door to strength.

CHUCK

So they say.

She just shakes her head and goes.

Wendy, on her way out, stops in the corner of the hallway by the government seal. She takes out her cell phone and calls Mafee. INTERCUT w/AXE CAPITAL.

WENDY

Mafee, it's Wendy Rhoades. The Ice Juice short. How do I get a piece of that?

MAFEE

There's an allocation. I can make it happen.

WENDY

As much as I can get.

MAFEE

You got it, baller.

She hangs up, conflicted about what she's just done.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Danny Margolis, HIMSELF, not some surrogate, is on a gurney being loaded into an ambulance looking pale and ill. He holds a three-quarter empty bottle of Ice Juice "Hello Yellow."

MARGOLIS

I've been drinking a lot of this stuff. Thought it was supposed to be good for you...

The EMT takes the bottle with a gloved hand. Margolis moans as the stretcher goes into the ambulance.

INT. FINANCIAL JOURNAL, ANOTHER DESK - DAY

There is action at the Financial Journal. ASSISTANT EDITORS, COPY EDITORS and OTHERS man phones, work on laptop computers trying to help with the story.

RANDY KORNBLUTH stands by his desk, on the phone, working the story alongside Dimonda, who leans back in his chair. They are in full Woodward/Bernstein teamwork mode.

Kornbluth listens for a moment, moves the mouthpiece of his phone and turns to Dimonda.

KORNBLUTH

I've got illness breaking out at six other locations. Some victims already have lawyers and are prepping a suit. Trace amounts of bacteria in the warehouse.

DIMONDA

I've got a doctor who treated a couple of the sick people speaking out against the Ice Juice 'flash-pas' technique as faux-science and unsafe.

Kornbluth shouts to someone off screen.

KORNBLUTH

Run down flash-pas, run down hazards of a corrupted fruit and or vegetable supply, run down fraudulent purification techniques.

Dimonda shouts to the same off screen presence.

DIMONDA

We may need a sidebar on food borne outbreaks at chain restaurants. Historical effects on the populous, company, the whole thing.

KORNBLUTH

Yeah, get on that. This is spider eggs in bubble gum. This is another Chipotle.

DIMONDA

Worse.

They keep working it.

INT. AXELROD HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

Lara stands by as THREE FLORISTS deliver a GROSS OF ROSES. MO drifts over from the dining room where they have laptops and paperwork set up.

MO

Wow...

Lara takes out her cell phone and dials Axe in his office.  
INTERCUT:

LARA

Why the flower bomb?

AXE

Because I still don't feel things are right between us. And I don't like it. And I want them to be.

A beat.

LARA

Well these are unnecessary. But beautiful...

She hangs up.

MO

He's trying to dig himself out?

Lara nods.

MO

The man picked an appropriate shovel.

The flowers, being set upon the kitchen island, keep coming.

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, LIBRARY - DAY

Chuck is entering on some PARALEGALS and AUSAs when his cell phone rings.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL W/IRA AT SR'S.

Ira is pacing, a hand on his forehead.

IRA

Chuck, it's Armageddon.

Chuck waves the assembled out of the library so he's alone.

CHUCK

Easy Ira, tell me what the hell is--

IRA

Stories are hitting. News outlets calling for comment. Social media, the press. People are getting sick. Something's breaking out--they don't know if it's listeria or Legionnaire's or what the fuck it is. Do you have a TV? Put it on--

CHUCK

I'm not going to turn on my TV, Ira. Tell me what I'd see.

IRA

People getting shoved into ambulances.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

IRA (CONT'D)

Comparisons to poisoned Tylenol.  
Reports of illness going back  
several weeks--that my fucking  
client failed to mention. The stock  
was getting pummeled so badly they  
halted trading. The smart money's  
fled to safety, and when that  
happens the bottom drops out.

CHUCK

Shit. What's my father saying?

There is the sound of a GROAN from Senior in the background,  
hunched over his computer with a TRADING HALT message on the  
screen.

IRA

When trading resumes the deal's  
going to break--that's when you go  
below the original deal price--  
which is an unmitigated disaster.

\*

CHUCK

This is fucking horrible. Is there  
any way you can sell--

IRA

My stock's all restricted!

CHUCK

Officer class, Ira. Keep it  
together.

Ira clicks off.

CHUCK

Sonofabitch...

Chuck hurries out of the library.

Taylor and Rudy sit across from one another.

TAYLOR

Rudy. I brought you in last.  
Because, when I look at this on a  
purely results-based model, that's  
where you stand. Last.

RUDY

Last. Really? I'm really last?

TAYLOR

By the numbers. Yes. Dead last.

RUDY

My name isn't Rudy. It's Peter.

TAYLOR

Oh. Do you prefer Peter?

RUDY

No. I love that they call me Rudy.  
You know why?

TAYLOR

No.

Rudy digs deep.

RUDY

It's because this place is like  
Notre Dame was for him. The real  
Rudy. I was a high school fuck up.  
Well, I got very, very good at  
video games and went on the  
circuit. And then, after, I went to  
fucking juco for a year and got  
into coding. I created some  
financial analytics--

TAYLOR

You did?

RUDY

There are some bugs in them. Still.  
But I impressed a teacher, got into  
Hofstra. Saw Axe speak there. And  
from that moment, this is all I  
dreamed about.

TAYLOR

Being here. At Axe Capital.

RUDY

Yes! The next time Axe showed on  
campus, I asked him a smart  
question--one I'd thought about,  
planned out ahead of time, and he  
said to see him when I got out.  
He'd find a place for me. He did.  
But I figured he'd be like my coach  
here and, well, he hasn't been  
that. At all. I've been left to  
figure it out for myself.

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

Well, there's no janitor with a heart of gold here to root you on. And no one gets on this field unless they are the fastest, strongest or most talented person on the depth chart.

Rudy hangs his head.

RUDY

I know. And I know I don't really belong. On paper. Or in any other way. But if I somehow make it out of this room alive, you won't see another person in this place work harder, longer, faster than me. I promise.

He stands.

On: Taylor, looking at him.

TAYLOR

You know what....you've convinced me.

49 INT. AXE CAPITAL, BULLPEN - DAY

49

Rudy exits the conference room and walks slowly through the bullpen. He gives a 'thumbs up.'

The PMs and Analysts start a low chant: "Rudy, Rudy..." It builds, and Mafee says, to everyone and no one...

MAFEE

"I just now realized what they're saying...Rudy, as in Rudy Ruettiger..."

On: Rudy, allowing himself a big smile as he takes his seat.

50 EXT. ICE JUICE STORE - DAY

50

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS and POLICE oversee the CLOSING of the store. The place is emptied of customers, the sign is turned to CLOSED. The equipment is dormant. The lights are off.

An Employee locks the door. And a SEAL is put over the door.

51 INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, CHUCK'S OFFICE - DAY 51

Chuck sits grim-faced at his desk.

CHUCK

Donna!

She appears at the door.

CHUCK

Have the kid get in here and get this fucking software off my computer. I have no more use for it.

\*  
\*

52 INT. AXE CAPITAL, WAGS' OFFICE - DAY 52

Axe is there with Wags, their spirits high. An unopened bottle of expensive liquor sits on the desk between them.

WAGS

Well if ol' Rhoades Senior was counting on any liquidity from this particular venture, he is sadly mistaken. Because it's leaving him cash strapped and tits up.

Axe smiles.

WAGS

And speaking of cash, this could have him looking to sell Palm Beach.

AXE

Ooh, the pride and joy.

WAGS

If you knew how many times I've seen the crusty bastard strutting around Mar-a-Lago bragging about his better frontage.

AXE

You know what? Have someone down there ready to pounce if the place hits the market.

WAGS

(liking it)  
Straw bidder.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

(nods)

I'll scoop it up cheap when the  
fire sale starts.

Wags glances at his screens.

WAGS

Trading on ICEJ resumed just in  
time for the closing bell. Care to  
watch the docking of the  
Hindenburg?

Axe moves around and they watch the final moments.

WAGS

Ding, ding, ding. Closing price of  
\$3.89. Stillborn. Reuters says:  
ICEJ: Fresh Squeezed Chapter 11 in  
its Future.

AXE

That is one busted-ass IPO. Crack  
that bottle.

Wags reaches for it and does. Just then Mafee enters, holding  
the day's trading reports. He hands them to Wags.

MAFEE

Just need your signature on the  
trading report.

Wags takes it, flips through.

WAGS

We crushed it today...Whoah, what's  
this?

MAFEE

What?

WAGS

The big ICEJ allocation to the New  
Beginnings fund? What the fuck?

MAFEE

Wendy Rhoades wanted in. She called  
in the request right before the  
thing went south. She took down a  
huge chunk of change for herself. I  
assumed it came from you, Axe.

(CONTINUED)

AXE

It fucking didn't. You notify me next time she makes a request like this. Before you fucking fulfill it, unless you want to think about another career besides trading equities.

MAFEE

You got it. Fuck. Sorry. Fuck.

Wags scrawls his signature. Mafee takes the papers and leaves in a hurry. Axe and Wags look at one another.

WAGS

What do you think she knew?

AXE

Not sure. But either way, it's a strong move betting against the family like that.

WAGS

Paid off.

Axe seems troubled by the news.

AXE

Today it did...

--Chuck sits at his desk, heavy with what just went down.

--And the glum faces of Senior and Ira--staring into the screen for answers--are in sharp contrast to Axe and Wags.

Taylor packs up their files and exits the conference room. Stands a moment, just kind of collecting their thoughts.

Wags approaches, almost startling them.

WAGS

Who'd ya can?

TAYLOR

I didn't do it to be perceived as tough.

(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

But to make it clear that if you survived today, you were now, officially, on the team and wouldn't need to keep looking over your shoulder.

WAGS

Yeah, yeah. Someone still got the stake through the heart, and I want to know who.

TAYLOR

I could have justified firing Rudy. He's still finding his footing. But the guy is scrappy and deserves the chance. So I fired Pununzio instead. He's kind of a weasel.

WAGS

Good a reason as any! And now you're baptized by blood.

TAYLOR

I need a drink.

WAGS

Like...a real drink?

TAYLOR

Yeah. Maybe a whole bottle of a real drink.

Wags claps Taylor on the shoulder. It's true, Taylor is carrying the weight of it already as they make their way toward the door.

There are only one or two cars in the lot at this hour.

Taylor reaches their Mini when Dollar Bill gets out of his minivan and steps up to them with a gym bag in his hand.

DOLLAR BILL

You're not gonna be in this clown car for long.

TAYLOR

I love it. It's a great car.

Dollar Bill looks around.

DOLLAR BILL

I didn't want to do this on site.  
That's why I offered to take you to  
coffee.

TAYLOR

Do what?

DOLLAR BILL

This is for you.

He holds out the gym bag. Taylor hesitates for a moment, then  
takes it.

DOLLAR BILL

Open it up.

They unzip it and look inside.

ANGLE ON: The inside of the bag. Cash. Banded together bricks  
of hundreds.

DOLLAR BILL

That's two hundred and fifty  
thousand dollars. As a personal  
thank you from me to you. On  
Klaxon. And I'm cheap as fuck.

TAYLOR

I'm well compensated. More than  
well compensated.

DOLLAR BILL

Yeah. Officially, and on the books  
with records of the transactions  
everywhere. But I wanted to spiff  
you above that. Everyone in our  
line needs cash squirreled away. It  
can make all the difference.  
Believe me.

TAYLOR

I can see you are telling the  
truth.

DOLLAR BILL

Then believe me when I say this:  
There's more coming. More of all of  
it. Took me a while. But now I  
understand exactly what Axe sees in  
you. Have a good night.

(CONTINUED)

Bill turns and leaves. Then Taylor looks down, as if noticing, for the first time, that they didn't give back the gym bag.

Taylor thinks a beat, then gets into the Mini with it and starts it up.

56 INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT, STUDY - NIGHT 56

Chuck enters. The place has the vibe of a wake. Ira is slumped on the couch, his dream crashed and burned.

CHUCK  
Did I actually hear mom crying from the other room...?

SENIOR  
Might've been me.

\*  
\*

IRA  
You want to play the 'on paper' game now? I'm down millions today. I can't believe how much goddamned money I lost.

Senior is drinking hard and fast, like a man who's seen horrible sights at the front of some bloody war.

SENIOR  
It was never yours to begin with. You've got to get it in the boat before you can hang it on the goddamned wall...Only thing to do at a time like this, is write off the loss against your cap gains.

IRA  
This was supposed to be my cap gain...Anyway, I should be apologizing to you.

SENIOR  
Fucking right. But you should really apologize to your friend--

CHUCK  
Dad--

(CONTINUED)

SENIOR

Since he's the one who took the  
actual pounding.

Ira slowly puts it together, horror dawning.

IRA

Oh god, no, Chuck...you didn't. You  
went into your trust?

CHUCK

(nods)

I authorized it. I had that much  
confidence in it. And you, Ira. I'd  
do it again. It was a fluke thing.

IRA

The whole 8 million dollar equity  
piece?

CHUCK

Yes--

SENIOR

That's where we started.

They turn towards Senior.

IRA

What?

CHUCK

Dad?

SENIOR

It was rolling. The thing was a  
complete monster. And what you do  
when you have an advantage is press  
it.

CHUCK

How much?

SENIOR

All of it.

This lands like an artillery shell on Chuck.

CHUCK

So the entire trust is...

SENIOR

Gone.

(CONTINUED)

IRA

I'm going to throw up--

SENIOR

Well, you did have that Ice Juice today.

They look at Senior, aghast. He raises his glass and then drains it.

As Taylor walks up to their building, they see Connerty, leaning against his car, waiting for them. Taylor is uncomfortable to be carrying the bag of money, but tries to make little of the bag.

CONNERTY

I have never used the word swanky before. But that's what this building is. Swanky.

TAYLOR

I wouldn't use that word either. But I can't say you're wrong.

CONNERTY

And you can afford swanky, so why shouldn't you live in it?

TAYLOR

Again. I wouldn't put it that way. But yes.

CONNERTY

That must feel good. My own apartment is probably a quarter the size of yours, in a part of town that's considerably worse than this. During the winter, the heat pipes bang practically all night.

TAYLOR

I grew up in a place like that.

CONNERTY

Sometimes I look at my surroundings, and wonder why I stay doing what I do. I mean, your boss offered to put me in a place like this.

TAYLOR

Really?

CONNERTY

Practically got on his hands and knees and begged me to work for him. And the night I turned him down, when I got home, and looked around my place, for about ten minutes I felt like an idiot.

TAYLOR

I can understand that.

CONNERTY

But then, after I showered and got in bed, I fell straight asleep. Because--and I know this sounds like a kind of nursery story--because I had a clean conscience. I was where I was supposed to be. Doing the right thing. And I'd looked temptation in the face and turned away from it.

Taylor absorbs this. Then:

TAYLOR

I'm happy for you. And now, I am going to go inside.

Connerty blocks their path.

CONNERTY

You can. In a second. But as you are putting your head on your pillow tonight, I want you to think about what you are really trading on in order to live here, work there, be who you are.

TAYLOR

I think about it all the time.

CONNERTY

That means there's still hope. Because soon, you'll never think about it again. You will just glide along, rich, with even bigger apartments and nicer watches and faster planes. Only none of it will matter to you at all. We never use the words we really mean--

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

Like swanky?

CONNERTY

No. Like soul. Your soul. It's the only word that fits, Taylor. Every day that you keep on your current course, you are putting your soul on the line, letting it leach out of you, until only emptiness remains. Axelrod will demand things of you, incrementally, that will change the fundamental nature of who you are. And I am here because I can give it back to you.

A long pause. It's as if the bag is actually getting heavier. And after the day Taylor has had, they know that Connerty isn't lying. Still...

TAYLOR

I don't believe in the soul, not in the way it's traditionally used, nor in the more modern meaning which connotes connectedness and being spiritually awake. What I do believe in are actions. Purpose. Purity of vocation. And the challenges associated with those things. The things that make me feel alive. Axe Capital gives me all of that and more. So you worry about my soul. And I'll just keep doing my job.

CONNERTY

You will. Right up until you get caught. Believe me, when you're in jail, you'll start thinking about soul again. Like every other convict I've put away. Only then it'll be much too late to do anything about it.

They stare at each other a moment longer, then Connerty steps aside and Taylor enters the building.

58

INT. AXELROD HOME, FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

58

Axe enters. He finds Lara on the couch, drinking red wine. He notices 1 DOZEN ROSES stand on the kitchen island.

AXE

I figured on more wow factor for two thousand bucks.

LARA

I had the rest dropped off at the hospital.

AXE

Thoughtful of you.

A few pizzas on stones rest on the table in front of her.

She looks up at him. Almost warmly.

LARA

You know who you look like, right now?

AXE

Who?

LARA

Bobby Fucking Axelrod. It's been awhile.

AXE

I had a good day. Glad you noticed.

LARA

I notice. I'm not the one who takes anything between us for granted.

AXE

You're right. That's why I was trying to formalize the apology with the flowers.

LARA

Then I formally accept.

She pours him a glass of wine.

AXE

So we start over from here.

LARA

Yeah...

(CONTINUED)

AXE

So this is like a first date?

LARA

Sure. Tell me something about yourself.

AXE

I'm in finance.

LARA

Sounds boring.

AXE

No. Not today. Today, I kicked ass at work. Big project I've spent the last few weeks on.

LARA

Who's ass did you kick?

AXE

Rhoades. Big time. We pounded a company he was in. Your friends at the bar helped. Everyone stepped up.

LARA

Good.

He glances at the pizzas.

AXE

These don't look like Bruno's.

LARA

Fuck Bruno. Ryan did these up in the wood burning oven.

A memory strikes Axe.

AXE

Remember our real first date?

He goes to the fridge. Comes back with a 1/2 kilo tin--a tub really--of BELUGA CAVIAR.

AXE  
I was trying to dazzle you.

LARA  
You did. But I didn't even like  
this stuff back then.

He sits down and SPOONS OUT HEAPING MOUNDS of the black gold onto the pizza.

AXE  
You got used to it.

He hands Lara a piece. Takes one into his own hands. And they begin diving in.

LARA  
Still better than anchovies.

AXE  
That's for fucking sure.

He sits back, begins to eat. She curls into him with her glass of wine. Things have grown normal again, intimate.

59 INT. AXELROD HOME, BEDROOM - NIGHT 59

TIME CUT TO: Axe and Lara in their bedroom. They're in bed, clothes have been shed and on the verge of making love.

The chemistry that always made it hot between them should be in effect. But it's not. Axe is on top of her when he realizes she's just not really there. He stops, rolls off.

AXE  
What's going on, where are you?

LARA  
I'm trying...I dunno, Bobby, I'm  
really trying.

Axe can't proceed on these terms. He moves away, which is fine with her. They lay there, side by side on their backs, staring at the ceiling as this new reality sinks in.

60 INT. YALE CLUB, CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT 60

Chuck enters, carrying the load of the busted IPO and the loss of his whole trust.

He sits down on the edge of the bed for a long, portentous moment.

He begins to miserably convulse in some outpouring of emotion, he puts his head in his hands, his shoulders heave, he seems to be coming completely apart.

(CONTINUED)

We PUSH IN and...

Even The Losers begins to play again...

FLASHBACK TO:

61 INT. CHUCK'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK 61

The moment Sacker left him in episode 209, after he learned that Axe bought the Churchill books out from under him.

An idea--THE IDEA--comes to him.

He goes to the phone to call his father.

CHUCK (INTO PHONE)

Dad...

QUICK CUT TO:

62 INT. SENIOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT, FLASHBACK 62

Shards of the scene from 209, where Chuck tells Senior it's fine to invade Chuck's trust for the Ice Juice deal.

CUT TO:

63 INT. INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDOR - DAY, FLASHBACK 63

Lawrence Boyd is doing his job, running the buffer over the endless corridor's floor, when Chuck steps out of a stairwell.

CHUCK

How would you like to be done with this floor, for good? And out of that halfway house and home with only your platinum wristwatch for jewelry instead of an ankle bracelet?

BOYD

When? How?

CHUCK

Almost immediately.

BOYD

Any deal I make with you has to be in writing.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

Terms of your release will be. This meeting, and what I instruct you to do, will never even be spoken of again.

BOYD

Whatever it is, I'm ready.

Chuck leans in close.

CHUCK

Upon my word, you will make a call to Bobby Axelrod and tell him you need to see him. That it's urgent. Then, when he shows up, you tell him the truth in a business matter: that my father, Charles Rhoades Senior, has taken a massive position in a new IPO--Ice Juice.

Boyd weighs what Chuck is asking of him.

BOYD

I believe I can do all that.

INT. OPR, DAKE'S OFFICE - NIGHT, FLASHBACK

OLIVER DAKE sits at his desk in the Office of Professional Responsibility in D.C. His boss KARL ALLERD enters.

ALLERD

Bittersweet day for me today, Dake.

DAKE

Why's that, sir?

ALLERD

You must've impressed some people while you were in New York. The Attorney General among them.

Dake tries to understand what he's hearing.

DAKE

Sir...?

ALLERD

You've been named interim U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District.

DAKE

I've been named...?

ALLERD

A.G. said: "smarts and ambition are coming off of him like heat waves from an Oklahoma blacktop"...You've gotta get on a train.

Dake gets up, starts organizing his things.

DAKE

How did this...?

ALLERD

It's the federal gov, no one can untangle that ball of string. I always knew I'd be working for you someday...

65

INT. PENN STATION - DAY, FLASHBACK

65

Dake moves toward the exit of the station once again.

66

EXT. PENN STATION - DAY, FLASHBACK

66

As Dake walks outside to where he expects his car to be waiting, he instead sees CHUCK STANDING THERE.

ON: Dake, stunned.

DAKE

Rhodes?

CHUCK

You didn't think this shit happened by accident, did you, Mr. Dake?

Chuck steers a mute Dake toward the car.

CHUCK

A word of advice: when you get the big job, you want to hit the ground running. You're going to have a shitload of FBI at your disposal, and this is how I suggest you deploy them: Axelrod.

\*

CUT TO:

A QUICK MONTAGE OF REPRISED & FLASHBACK SCENES:

(CONTINUED)

--Axe enters the Irish Bar. From a rooftop across the street, two FBI AGENTS, on their bellies, shoot footage of him.

CHUCK (V.O.)

Bobby Axelrod will be almost impossible to track. So in addition to monitoring all his trades, follow everyone he touches, and everyone they touch.

\*

--Later, Slayton exits the Irish Bar and makes a left. A BURST OF TELEPHOTO SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS is taken. Then the Burkes exit the bar and make a right. A BURST OF PHOTOS is taken of them.

CHUCK (V.O.)

The pattern won't be easy to spot, but it will be there. There are eighteen Ice Juice locations in New York City alone, you will need to be inside all of 'em.

--Victor's Housekeeper buys an Ice Juice, walks around a corner, crosses herself, DUMPS A VIAL OF LIQUID into the beverage, and slams it home. As she swallows, SWING CAMERA to find an AGENT, pretending to take a selfie, but actually filming her.

CHUCK (V.O.)

Because he will be acting out of malice, he will take risks he'd normally avoid--he will use compromised associates. You must be ready across the board.

--As Margolis gives the "Hello Yellow juice" bottle to the EMT and is closed into the ambulance, the EMT HANDS THE BOTTLE to a gloved FBI AGENT.

BACK TO DAKE AND CHUCK...

DAKE

So you leveraged the Attorney General into my appointment.

CHUCK

It was no arm twist. I just told her that smarts and ambition were coming off of you like heat waves from an Oklahoma blacktop. She agreed.

(CONTINUED)

DAKE

What makes you think I want this  
case? That I'll even take it?

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

One thing you impressed upon me was your sense of justice.

DAKE

Well, I don't believe he's the only one acting out of malice.

CHUCK

The difference is that I have learned to control and harness mine.

Dake gets in the car.

DAKE

Then...I look forward to working together.

He closes the door.

CUT TO:

Lawrence Boyd, in work coveralls, stands in the hallway on his cheap pre-paid cell phone.

BOYD

Stock is running. When will you do it?

AXE

Fucking soon.

Boyd goes back to buffing the linoleum floor. PULL BACK TO REVEAL: CHUCK STANDING BY, watching.

CHUCK

(over the buffer)  
You're gonna keep doing that?

BOYD

(over the buffer)  
I always finish a job.

"Even The Losers" slams into its chorus as we push in on Chuck and back into the present in the...

68 INT. YALE CLUB, CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT 68

Back to Chuck on the edge of the bed. Tears are streaming down his cheeks now. But he's not crying. No, he is fucking laughing his face off.

Even The Losers get lucky sometimes.

FADE OUT.